

Cath Petroskey

From: pselden@aol.com
Sent: Friday, October 27, 2017 3:10 PM
To: Cath Petroskey
Cc: aneta@lmb.org; president@kalamazoobicycleclub.org;
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Subject: Public Comment-Please Support HB 5003, 4185, 4265 and 4198

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Dear Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee,

My name is Paul Selden. I'm the Director of Road Safety for the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club. I'm also a husband, father of three, a grandfather of five, a life-long business owner (former, now retired) and a long-time resident of the great State of Michigan. Like you I am working hard to make Michigan an even better place to live, learn, work and play.

As part of my fervent desire to help make Michigan even better in many ways, I am writing to respectfully urge you to support House Bills 5003 (Schor), 4185 (Bizon) and 4265 (Hughes), and 4198 (Alexander).

As you know, these bills help extend protections for non-motorists and motorist alike, at a time when more protection is desperately needed. I believe these bills will help close the gap in protections already enjoyed by other vulnerable users such as construction workers, children in designated school zones and others. Bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchair users need the same protections. In addition, everyone needs your help in reducing the amount of distracted driving that has apparently increased so dramatically in recent years, and part of that can be achieved through drivers education.

I speak from personal experience as a vulnerable roadway user. I'm glad I'm able to write this email at all.

While riding as safely as I possibly could and while following the rules of the road, a motorist sideswiped me and could have killed me. EVERY INCH made a difference between my life and death. That motorist got off with more or less just a slap on the wrist compared to the crimes with which she was charged. The hit and run and driving with a revoked license charges were plea bargained away. A motorist once deliberately zoomed around me, within inches, then slammed on her brakes right in front of me. Fortunately, since we were both coming up to a red light and I was already slowing down, I was able to stop in time. I asked why she did it. She yelled at me, "You shouldn't be on the road!"

That is just my story. Almost every bicyclist I know has had similar stories to tell, or much worse. Like cyclists around the world, I was devastated by the bicycling tragedy in Kalamazoo on June 7, 2016. Since then the deaths and injuries of bicyclists ... among the most vulnerable legal users of the road ... continue. League of Michigan Bicyclists Tour Director Scott Elliott was hit in July and World Champion triathlete Karen McKeachie lost her life on Friday, August 26th last year. There have been way too many than I care to list, state-wide, continuing even in 2017. And way too many people have had their lives ruined as the result of tragic encounters with a distracted driver.

Everyone using the roads and right of ways in the State of Michigan need the extra protection you can give us, and the sooner the better. I think the tragedies are likely to spike up even more if nothing is done.

The bills you before you will give law enforcement an added tool when trying to keep the public safe, and will give the community another way to educate the public and raise awareness that we need to share the road safely and civilly.

If the House passes the bills before you, I firmly believe they, and the increased public awareness and education surrounding their passage, will save lives and make Michigan more livable in more ways than one, for all of us. For all these reasons and more, I strongly urge you to pass this legislation as a matter of sound public safety.

I am confident that our local leaders in the Kalamazoo area are continuing to do the right thing. I hope and pray you will, too.

Regards,

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Regards,

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